

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HONORING ROGER ANDAL

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to my very close friend, Roger Andale. Last month, Roger died following a long battle with Crohn's disease. His passing is a tremendous loss to our veterans, as well as a personal loss for my family and me. His friendship will be terribly missed.

Roger began his extraordinary service to our country as a combat medic with the Army's Fourth Infantry Division during the war in Vietnam. It was Roger's duty to help his fallen comrades and tend to their wounds, and it was a responsibility that came naturally to him.

He braved enemy fire to ensure the injured were safely evacuated from the battlefield. Roger often did so with little regard to his own personal safety and was ultimately wounded in battle.

He received the Purple Heart, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Campaign Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal for his service to his country. But for Roger what mattered most were not the commendations, but the knowledge that he had helped his fellow soldiers.

After returning stateside, Roger dedicated himself to working on behalf of our Nation's veterans. For the next 30 years, he was active in various veterans' causes, and at the time of his death he was completing his service as the South Dakota commander of the Disabled American Veterans.

The creed of the Disabled American Veterans is "building better lives for America's disabled veterans and their families." I think it's profoundly true to say Roger personified these words and made them his life's mission.

As a former Army medic, Roger understood both the physical and emotional wounds of war. Some soldiers survive the harrows of battle, only to suffer severe injuries including brain trauma and amputated limbs. These veterans required lifelong medical treatment, and Roger was adamant that they receive it.

Roger also recognized that some wounds heal long after the battle is over, if at all. That is why he consistently called upon his congressional Representatives to increase funding for posttraumatic stress disorder initiatives.

Roger fought to make sure homeless veterans were sheltered. He worked to make sure that soldiers returning from war were transitioned back to society with as much ease as possible. But the issue most identified with Roger was mandatory funding.

I have introduced mandatory funding legislation in each of the past three Congresses, and Roger was the bill's most tireless and dedicated champion. If it were possible to pass mandatory funding based on Roger's passion and

commitment, enacting this legislation into law would have happened long ago.

Mandatory funding is long overdue, and in honor of Roger, I believe we must redouble our efforts to ensure the VA health care program has guaranteed funding adequate to provide veterans' health care each and every year.

For over three decades Roger never shied away from a fight. He was motivated by his sincere belief that if you make a promise to the men and women placed in harm's way, then you have a responsibility to honor those commitments when they return.

But what Roger valued most was honesty. He was a straight-shooter, and it was one of his most endearing personality traits. If you asked Roger a question, he would give you a straight answer—and he expected one in return.

It speaks volumes about Roger's character that his peers continually elected him to leadership positions within the Disabled American Veterans. In addition to holding every elected position in the Sioux Falls chapter of the DAV, Roger served twice as the State commander, and represented South Dakota on the executive national committee.

On a personal note, Roger had a close working relationship with my staff and in particular with my Chief of Staff, Drey Samuelson. He was an invaluable resource and often provided insight on legislation and veterans' benefits programs. Despite occasional legislative setbacks, Roger always kept a positive outlook on the process.

In the days following Roger's death some veterans have expressed how much more difficult the fight will be without Roger to lead the charge. Without question, Roger's voice will be missed. But we should remember that the best way to honor Roger's life is to fight wholeheartedly for the causes he championed.

Mr. President, my thoughts are with Roger's wife Peggy and their two children during this difficult time. Roger left us much too soon, but his commitment to our veterans and his service to the public and to our Nation will continue to inspire us all.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARTINEZ. I rise to speak on S. 3711. My understanding is, through a unanimous consent agreement, I am permitted to speak for 10 minutes on the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GULF OF MEXICO ENERGY SECURITY ACT

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, over the last several days we have been discussing the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act. Today, in an hour or so from now, we will have a cloture vote on this very important legislation. For my part, I have tried to make it clear how important this legislation is to my State of Florida, how important the protection of our fragile environment in our State is to our people. As a young 15-year-old, I came to Florida as many people who have been transplanted from elsewhere, to enjoy a Florida lifestyle. Since that time I have been in love with this wonderful State, what it has to offer to people, to families, and the great traditions Florida has had as a place to enjoy the outdoors. I have on countless occasions enjoyed Florida's beaches, fishing, enjoyed other outdoor pursuits which are such a natural part of what Florida is about.

As the years have gone by, I have passed that on and instilled that in my children, as I did a little bit yesterday, passing it on to my grandchildren when we were enjoying New Smyrna beach yesterday, under that hot Florida sun, but also the beautiful sandy beaches. Part of what this bill is about for Floridians is protecting the future, passing that love on to other generations by ensuring that Florida remains pristine, that it remains the kind of place a visitor from all over the country would choose to come to enjoy year after year and where other Florida families might begin to develop and enjoy their own family traditions, enjoying the great outdoors Florida has to offer, our sandy beaches, the fishing, and other recreational opportunities that come about as a result of this wonderful natural habitat we have.

But also protecting it is important as an economic consideration. It is part of what makes Florida's economy so thriving and important—the tourism. Before there was Disney and Universal Studios, and those types of attractions, it was the beaches and the climate that brought folks to Florida to come and enjoy. At the end of the day, that is our calling card.

Protecting Florida's environment is not something we take lightly. Protecting the environment in Florida is not something that is a Republican or a Democratic issue. That is why Senator NELSON, my colleague from Florida, and I have worked so closely together over the last year or so as this great debate has raged on about what to do to protect Florida, while at the same time yielding ever more increasing pressures to drill and explore in the Outer Continental Shelf.

In the Senate, I maintain another tradition—the tradition of other Florida Senators, Connie Mack, Bob Graham, others who have fought over time to protect Florida's treasures from those who don't share our values. I am proud to be part of that tradition.

I am firmly committed to this tradition. And in that tradition, I have worked very hard on—and I am proud to say—what I believe has been a good compromise for our State, along with Senator NELSON and members of the Florida delegation in the House of Representatives, who have worked diligently as well to protect their areas of Florida, protect the State and at the same time understanding the great pressures we are under and the battle that has gotten fiercer and fiercer as demand has increased for ever more production of gas and oil.

As the prices at the pump continue to go up, as prices drive businesses abroad and overseas because of the high cost of natural gas, that pressure has been ever increasing. What I want to do today, in hoping that the people across the State and also across our Nation understand, is say that this bill puts the control of the future of our State in our hands.

As the map here shows, it provides a tremendous zone of protection for the State of Louisiana—125 miles south of Pensacola and the panhandle, but almost 320 some miles from Naples and 237 miles from Tampa. This yellow area is all part of the zone of protection that Florida will enjoy until the year 2022, a long time from now.

As a result of that protection, we have also done something very important to our State, which is upholding the tradition of our military readiness. This is a military mission line here, where no drilling will take place east of this line. What this does is protects the training missions that take place out of Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field, and the Naval Air Station in Pensacola as well. They train and practice. They test in this area here the guided munitions that are such a part of the necessary and difficult and dangerous world in which we live. Those marvelous weapons can sometimes make the difference between striking the right target or not due to these tests in the Gulf of Mexico. The F-22 fighter, which is going to be a very important part of the future of our military readiness, is going to train here. It is so fast that it requires the vastness of the Gulf of Mexico to be able to conduct maneuvers and training exercises that are necessary.

So this is a zone of protection for our State until 2022. Some might say it is just protection for the gulf. What about the Keys and the east coast of Florida? That is under a moratorium presently. The important protection here is to the gulf coast.

What has been under siege, gone after, is this area denoted as 181 and this shore, which is the stovepipe. This is what we have been seeking to protect, so we could protect our beaches until we had assurances that as exploration took place in this area for what is such a needed product, we also were protecting the military line and Florida's west coast. The east coast at this point is not under the same kinds of threat.

At the end of the day, there are going to be other attempts that we will have to fight and do what we can to protect Florida. At this moment, the crucial protection was to the gulf coast.

I am very thankful to Senator DOMENICI, chairman of the Energy Committee, who worked closely with me and has allowed me to play a role in crafting this important legislation, attempting to understand Florida's concerns, attempting to understand the difficult choices we have to make in this issue. Also, I appreciate the members of the House of Representatives. They have passed a very different bill from this one. I believe the protections for Florida in this bill are superior. I will take a moment to thank them for their diligence and vigilance for our State and for trying to come up with solutions and answers in a different environment than I have worked in with Senator NELSON in the Senate.

I want to make sure that, with great respect, we hope this is the legislation that will ultimately emerge and be passed by both Houses. I cannot support the House version. I have had clear assurances from our leaders that we are committed to working from the framework of the Senate bill. That has been important to me, and while I respect the hard work of our House colleagues and their autonomy as a body of Congress, I believe also we have to prevail on this Senate version of the bill. It is what the Senate can pass this year. It is the reality of the situation. I am hopeful we can impress upon our colleagues in the House by an overwhelming vote of support for this measure. Now is the time and this is the opportunity to protect Florida while at the same time providing some measure of improvement to the conditions we find ourselves in today with such a desperate need for oil and gas.

This area is rich in not only oil but natural gas. The natural gas production from this area may be greater than that of oil. That is a tremendously important resource for our Nation today as we try to power our plants and other facilities, at a time when so much electricity is being generated by the use of natural gas. It is important that we do all we can to bring down the price of natural gas. Chairman DOMENICI believes that, in talking with people in the industry, the passage of this bill could have a significant impact on the price of futures as it relates to natural gas. I hope that will come to pass because that will bode well for our Nation's energy needs and also for those who are trying to maintain jobs here that have been recently moving overseas.

Another part of the bill—and the Senator from Louisiana is on the floor; she has been such a good person to work with and is very understanding of Florida, but also has a very different perspective from her State. I know the revenue-sharing parts of the bill are going to be a great opportunity for the Gulf States that do so much of the

dirty work involving this—that put their shoreline on the line so the United States can be more energy self-sufficient—to do the things that are necessary as a result of the demanding nature of this work. Florida won't be doing that. Florida sought protection rather than revenue, and that is what we got.

I feel good about the bill. I think this is the best Florida can do at this time. The zone of protection we wanted to have, which was 125 miles, has been greatly exceeded in most dimensions, and we can go forward until the year 2022 with a settled plate, understanding that there will be production coming out of the gulf, but it will not impact our State.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is now closed.

GULF OF MEXICO ENERGY SECURITY ACT OF 2006—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the hour of 3 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 3711, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3711) to enhance the energy independence and security of the United States by providing for exploration, development, and production activities for mineral resources in the Gulf of Mexico, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 5:30 p.m. shall be divided equally between the two managers or their designees.

The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, before the Senator from Florida leaves the floor—and he may be staying through the debate—he has been extremely essential and instrumental and vital to the compromise that has come forward. I want to thank him for his leadership. As he alluded to, the five States in the gulf coast came together—the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and the State of the presiding officer, Texas, and he did an outstanding job as part of the coalition as well—with an arrangement that would have many mutual beneficial parts. One, it is going to provide oil and gas, and particularly natural gas. That is in such short supply. The Senator from Florida knows and all of our colleagues from Florida understand that natural gas is a raw material that is used to literally produce almost every product in America that you can think of, from rubber tires, to the automobiles themselves, to the products of ethanol, to fertilizers, chemicals—you name it, natural gas is used as a raw material.

The prices are too high. They have to come down. The industry is doing a